

REMARKS

An IDS is attached, listing documents cited by the Japanese Patent Office.

Claims 5, 7-11, and 18-23 are canceled without prejudice to reentry. Claims 6, 12, and 14 are amended to properly depend from claim 1.

The amendments to claim 1 are supported in claims 7, 8, 9, and 11 and in the specification on lines 12-22 of page 64; lines 6-15 on page 66; line 25 on page 67 through line 16 on page 68; line 17 on page 69 through line 7 on page 71; and lines 2-23 on page 81.

New claim 24 is supported in original claim 1, from which the subject matter of claim 24 was removed. The same is true for claims 28-29 in relation to independent claims 18 and 19.

New claim 25 is supported in Fig. 24, and the specification is amended to provide literal support for this claim.

New claim 26 is supported in the drawing Figs. 20, 24, and 34-36.

New claim 27 is supported in the specification at page 69, line 17 to page 70, line 4.

The new claims are patentable for the reasons below.

In response to the outstanding Action:

[1-7] Claims 1, 3, 4, 10, 13, 17, and 22 were rejected under §112, second paragraph. These claims are either amended or canceled without prejudice to reentry. Claim 1 is amended in view of the Examiner's remarks also.

As to claim 13, the Examiner is invited to note the discussion of the blade-shaped resilient member 223 at page 81, line 15, reading, "even if a relatively thin matter (such as a coin) is placed on the outer lid 38 ... the foreign matter such as the coin is prevented from sliding ... through a gap between the upper surface of the outer lid 38 and the rear cover 220."

[8-9] Claims 1, 5, 13-16, and 21-22 were rejected under §102 over Shin ‘837. This rejection is moot because claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of claims 7, 8, 9, and 11. The rejection of claims 7, 8, 9, and 11 is discussed below.

[10] Claims 18 and 19 were rejected under §102 over Merlin ‘772. This rejection is traversed.

With respect, the Examiner has confused the Applicants’ “drum opening”—which is in the drum—with the Applicants’ “inlet opening”—which is in the housing. The Applicants’ claimed open/close lid covers the inlet opening in the housing, and it is the open/close lid that is associated with the biasing means and holding means in the claims. The applied text of Merlin at col. 4, lines 35-65, relates to a tub door 26, which is part of the drum, not the housing. This passage does not relate to the lid 18. (The part 32 resting against the lid 18 in Fig. 1 is a “door flap” (col. 3, line 62), not a spring.)

[11-12] Claims 2-4 were rejected under §103 over Shin in view of Montassier FR ‘168 and Mutoh ‘387. This rejection is traversed on the basis of dependence from allowable claim 1.

[13] Claims 6-10 and 20 were rejected under §103 over Shin in view of Korean publication ‘183. This is respectfully traversed. Claim 6 depends from amended claim 1 which includes generally the subject matter of rejected claims 7-9. Claim 20 is canceled.

[14] Claims 11 and 12 were rejected under §103 over Shin in view of Korean ‘183 and Ericson ‘428. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 11 is now generally incorporated into claim 1.

Shin discloses a two-part folding lid 20 with two parts 21 and 22 that are hinged together. The lid opens by collapsing the two parts 21, 22 together.

Korean '183 discloses a two-part door (front 3a, back 3b) with bifold "accordion-like movement" (Abstract), quite similar to Shin.

Ericson is applied for a flexible sheet member covering a top face of the main body of the slide lid. The asserted flexible sheet is a hinge 42, which covers only edges of the panels 32, 34.

The Examiner asserts that the claims could be reached by combining Shin, Korean '183, and Ericson.

(1) Ericson does not disclose a flexible sheet member that "covers over" anything, nor is its folding cover a "slide lid" as claimed. The Examiner is invited to consider new claim 25, that still further distinguishes. None of the other references disclose a flexible sheet member, either, and therefore no combination (not admitted obvious) could reach the claims.

(2) None of the references discloses a curved face for guiding a lower surface of the slide lid, as claimed, and more especially none guides anything rearward of a rear edge of the inlet opening, as claimed.

(3) None of the references discloses guiding a lower surface of the slide lid in a vertical direction, as claimed.

(4) None of the references discloses a guide portion with a resilient member adjacent to a sheet member.

(5) With respect, Ericson would not have been combined with the other references because its folding action is different from, and incompatible with, the folding of the others. Ericson's Fig. 3 shows that it "rolls up" while the others show accordion-folding.

(6) New claim 26 recites a plurality of bar members greater than two, which is not disclosed by any of the applied washing machines. The plurality of Ericson is not combinable with the washing machines because there is no reason for such a combination.

(7) New claim 27 recites that ends of the bar members slid in the recited structure. None of the references disclose this.

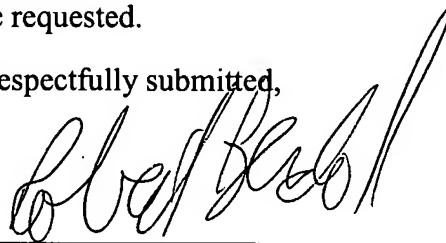
(8) The other references—Seagar, Mutoh, Montassier—do not make up for the deficiencies of the Ericson, Shin, and Korean '183.

[15] Claim 17 was rejected under §103 over Shin in view of Seager '506. Claim 17 is canceled and this rejection is moot.

[16] Claim 23 was rejected under §103 over Shin in view of Cuthbert '900. Claim 23 is canceled and this rejection is moot.

Withdrawal of the rejections and allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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AMENDMENT

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